

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk September 17, 2017

North & West edition No 782

AGRICULTURE

Brexit may not end live export trade

MEP says trade may continue even after we leave EU

TRANSPORT

£6m price tag for commuter boats

Trial proves a hit, but costs could prevent fixed clipper service

HEALTH

Hospital trust chief QUITTS

CEO Matthew Kershaw sensationally resigns to join health think tank

COMMUNITY

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How it proved much more than just producing own beer



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Kent on Sunday

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Raising a glass to bloom of community spirit

COMMUNITY spirit, so frequently cited as a key reason we remained so steadfast during the war, is at a very real risk of disappearing.

It has long been discussed how we no longer have the relationship with our neighbours which previous generations always took for granted.

We are cocooned within our homes, surrounded by creature comforts that mean actually venturing out of our front doors is no longer necessary even for the simple pleasures of human interaction.

Need a chat with someone? Well you can conjure their face up on your phone or tablet within seconds, or message them to your heart's content.

Youngsters no longer demand bikes as an essential means of transport to their friends' homes - they simply plug in their PC or games console and chat and play from the privacy of their bedrooms.

Add to that mix, pubs are closing,



Editor **Chris Britcher**

as are village stores, and community events and centres are forever being squeezed by lack of funds.

Yet, just sometimes, something emerges that reminds you of how a little effort goes a long way. Inside today's edition we look at the Deal Hop Farm where more than 100 people grew hops in their gardens and then united to harvest them. Next month they'll toast their efforts with the beer brewed as a result.

All involved spoke of how much good came out of the community spirit involved. And that's the key.

That spirit is always there, it just needs to be ignited by something or someone.

A common cause for which everyone can pull in the same direction, doesn't need to take a war to conjure up. It just takes a little bit of time, effort, patience and friendliness and it's back better than ever.

Perhaps Deal's example can be one we should all embrace.

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Hospital chief quits role at under fire health trust

By Tom Pyman

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THE chief executive of the under-fire East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust has quit, it was announced on Friday afternoon.

Matthew Kershaw admitted the trust, which runs the Kent & Canterbury Hospital as well as the William Harvey in Ashford and QEOM in Margate, had "not made as much progress as we'd have liked" in improving waiting times in emergency care.

He is to take up a post as a senior fellow with the health think tank The King's Fund.

But his decision to leave at such a key moment, less than two years into the job has come as a major surprise.

The trust controversially announced earlier this year it was set to make a number of cuts to services at the city hospital, with some 35 people who normally attend by ambulance every day with conditions such as heart attacks, strokes and pneumonia, instead diverted to its other sites.

The changes, which health

OUT: Matthew Kershaw oversaw controversial plans for Kent & Canterbury Hospital

chiefs insist are only temporary, but have been in place since June, are the result of the trust struggling to recruit enough permanent consultants.

It sparked major local protests from campaigners amid concerns that the hospital was being downgraded.

Speaking this week, he said: "I was appointed chief executive at the trust in 2015 and since then we have made good progress improv-

ing patient care in a number of areas, notably coming out of quality special measures in February 2017.

"Over the last two years we have worked together very hard and made improvements in performance, developed an emerging strategy for improved healthcare in east Kent with our partner health and social care organisations, and continued to build on our improving internal culture of the trust as

a place to work. We have also made a strong start on improving our finances.

"We have not, however, made as much progress as we would have liked with respect to performance on waiting times in emergency care."

As of next week, Liz Shutler, deputy chief executive and director of strategic development, will take over as acting chief executive until a formal appointment is made.



Hard shoulder set to become extra lane on six-mile stretch of M20

THE hard shoulder is set to be converted into an extra lane on a six-mile stretch of the M20 it was confirmed this week, as highways chiefs unveiled plans to upgrade it to a so-called 'smart' motorway.

The proposals go on show this weekend ahead of the introduction of new technology which will help manage traffic to reduce delays and improve safety.

Under the plans, the hard shoulder will be permanently converted into a live running lane in both directions between junction three, where the M20 merges with the M26 near West Malling and junction five for Aylesford.

New signs and signals will be used to vary the speed limit to reduce congestion at busy times, and to control traffic if there is an obstruction on the road ahead, as is currently in operation further along the motorway.

Highways England project manager Kaluba Kampanila said: "This new stretch of smart motorway

will tackle congestion and improve journey times for more than 112,000 drivers who use it every day.

"Smart motorways are central to our ambitious plans for modernising the motorway network and will add 120 miles of new lanes to motorways in the south east by 2020."

Work is scheduled to start in March 2018, with the smart motorway being fully operational in early 2020.

Public information events began at Ryarsh Village Hall on Friday, with others being held at Trottiscliffe Village Hall from 10am to 5pm on Saturday, and at Community Hall, Capel Morris Centre at the Royal British Legion Village from 3pm to 9pm on Friday, September 22 and 10am to 5pm on Saturday, September 23.

Meanwhile, there is set to be months of disruption when a footbridge, destroyed in a smash last August, is replaced over the M20 between junctions three and four.

College and council to meet over £800,000 funding row

TALKS are set to be held between council and college chiefs over the coming days following a row over funding for high needs students.

It emerged earlier this month that some pupils due to start courses at East Kent College were told just days before enrolling that they did not have a place due to last minute course cuts.

Principal Graham Razey said EKC and Canterbury College were collectively owed some £800,000 by Kent County Council to help support students with additional learning needs - something the local authority strongly denies.

However, the college now says it will dip into its own coffers to ensure students didn't miss out.

Arson fears as eight boats destroyed in major blaze

AN investigation into the cause of a blaze which ripped through a boatyard in Faversham in the early hours of Thursday morning is continuing.

One man in his 30s was arrested by police on suspicion of arson following the fire which destroyed eight boats in dry dock at Iron Wharf, along with three Portacabins and a workshop.

At its height, six fire engines were on the scene with dozens of firefighters, and local residents were urged to keep windows and doors shut to protect against the smoke.

Crews remained on the scene until the mid afternoon to make the area safe and dampen down. Police believe the fire was started deliberately.



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Funding bid to tackle county's deadly A-roads

A £3.5m bid is being launched by the county council to improve two of Kent's most dangerous A-roads.

The Department for Transport (DfT) is inviting proposals from highway authorities across the country to improve the safety of 50 specific sections of local A-roads, where the risk of fatal and serious collisions is highest, based on the analysis by the Road Safety

Foundation.

Kent County Council is set to agree at its environment and transport cabinet committee next week to seek the capital funding from the government's Safer Roads Fund for work on the A252 between Charing and Chilham and the A290 between Canterbury and Whitstable.

Fire checks on KCC sites following Grenfell reveal none pose risk to public

By Tom Pyman

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A MAJOR fire safety review of buildings on 155 Kent County Council sites which have some form of exterior cladding has been carried out following the Grenfell Tower tragedy - and given the all clear.

The blaze, which killed at least 80 people in west London back in June, sparked a series of intense safety checks by authorities across the country.

This has now been completed and it has been found that none of the buildings have the specific aluminium composite material which was present at Grenfell and which has failed the national fire safety testing.

An update reported to KCC's scrutiny committee said that where cladding is present "the risk associated with them is low with fire risk assessments in place".

Two high-rise residential blocks close to the Kent History and Library Centre in Maidstone, owned by KCC, received particular attention.



TRAGEDY: Grenfell Tower

However, these buildings were constructed without any form of cladding, but with a system which has a high fire protection rating.

Eric Hotson, KCC's cabinet member for corporate and democratic servic-

es, said: "Fire safety is a complex matter and mitigating risk is a blend of building layout and construction, safety systems and management.

"We have carried out a rigorous examination of all the buildings for which KCC is responsible and our teams have been working extremely hard over the past few weeks to ensure that proper fire safety precautions are in place.

"In general, we have no concerns to date of high or significant fire risk, although we will be identifying areas of improvement and an action plan to achieve them."

This week saw the opening of the public inquiry into the tragedy with its chairman reassuring those affected by the disaster that the probe "can and will provide answers".

Sir Martin Moore-Bick said he hoped the inquiry would "provide a measure of solace" to the survivors and the families of those caught up in the blaze.

However, survivors say they fear the probe will not deliver the answers they seek.



HAPPY: Joe Cottingham

Melon-tastic as farm grows bumper crop

THE British climate has failed to dampen one farm's spirit after it managed to produce a record-breaking 1,000 watermelons this year.

Typically grown in warmer parts of Europe, the batch has been cultivated in polytunnels with insulated soil at Watts Farm in Dartford.

The bumper batch was then sold to supermarket chain Asda. A spokesman said it was the "largest volume of watermelons ever produced on home soil".

Grower Joe Cottingham said: "Last year we trialled 20 or 30 different types of watermelon, learnt how to grow them and learnt the potential challenges too.

"We selected the two varieties which we felt performed best in our trials and that's what we've been growing this year.

"Normally I'd say it's becoming possible to grow watermelons in Britain because we're getting slightly hotter temperatures in the summer, although that's changed in the last few weeks as we've had abysmal weather, but the weather was kinder in May and June which meant we could get the crop established.

"As far as I'm aware no-one else in Britain is growing watermelons, so it's great to be at the vanguard of something new."

Spa town rapist set for jail after verdicts

A 20-year-old from Sussex has been convicted of raping two women in the Tunbridge Wells area - one of whom he attacked in his car after offering her a lift home.

Chiron Hutchinson had denied carrying out attacks in the town but was found guilty following a trial at Maidstone Crown Court. He'll be sentenced next month.

Hutchinson, from Uckfield, was initially arrested on October 12 last year following a media appeal.

Detectives had been seeking information after a woman reported being raped on October 8 after a night out in Tunbridge Wells. After accepting a lift home he pulled over in Rusthall and raped her.

He was also found guilty of raping another victim, twice, in the town on October 2. He had earlier admitted to two offences of unlawful sexual activity in relation to a teenage girl.

Det ch insp Tony Pledger said: "Hutchinson presents a real danger to the public, particularly young women."

Army set to move in on Rochester bridges

A MOCK demolition army training exercise will see lanes on the bridges at Rochester closed later this month.

It will come hot on the heels of essential maintenance work which will cause disruption to those using the main town centre route.

During the week beginning September 25, temporary lane closures will be in place overnight to enable essential works to take place.

The works are part of a routine cleaning programme, and will be carried out by FM Conway on behalf of the Rochester Bridge Trust, the centuries-old organisation which maintains the crossings.

On Tuesday, September 26, there will also be closures to facilitate the training exercise, conducted by officers participating in the Royal Engineer Troop Commanders' Course (RETCC).

Alternating single lane closures will be required on both bridges throughout the week.

The traffic management is scheduled to run overnight from approximately 9pm until 5am.

Dreamland faces Florida super parks

DREAMLAND will take on global heavyweights like Walt Disney World and Universal Studios in Orlando for the crown of best family theme park.

The Margate leisure complex has been nominated by Thanet District Council for the gong, which features in this year's Family Traveller Awards. Another Kent venue shortlisted is Rochester's Diggerland.

Dreamland re-opened following a £25m facelift earlier this year with a host of new attractions including a live music stage, which recently hosted a sell-out performance from Gorillaz.

Other nominees for the award include Aquaventure Waterpark at Atlantis, The Palm, Chessington World of Adventures, Dubai Parks & Resorts, Europa-Park, Efteling, Netherlands, Legoland Windsor, The Green Planet, Paultons Park, Peppa Pig World and Islands of Adventure.

Voting closes at midnight on October 20.

To vote for Dreamland, visit <https://familytraveller.com/awards/vote/best-family-theme-park>.

MPs voice fears over castle in light of county town local plan

By Tom Pyman

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A DOCUMENT which sets out Maidstone's development over the next 15 years could be halted at the eleventh hour following intervention from two local MPs.

Helen Whately and Helen Grant have both written to communities and local government secretary Sajid Javid, expressing concern over some of the proposals in the borough council's local plan which they claim would create "lasting damage to villages and countryside" around the county town.

The plan is set to be approved at a full council meeting later this month, but Faversham and Mid Kent MP Mrs Whately has asked the minister to personally intervene.

One of her primary concerns is proposals she believes will be "to the detriment" of Leeds Castle - the heritage site dating back to the 12th century.

She said: "Leeds Castle is a national treasure - so development around junction 8 is not just a local question, it's a national concern."

"Industrial buildings or offices on the approach to the castle would change the experience for visitors. It would never be the same again."

Neighbouring MP for Maidstone and the Weald, Helen Grant, agreed, saying: "I very



BLIGHTED: Fears expressed over impact of development on Leeds Castle

much agree with the stance Helen Whately is taking regarding Leeds Castle and I have written to the secretary of state to offer my support.

"Furthermore I have my own deep-rooted concerns about additional flaws which exist within the emerging local plan.

"I am particularly concerned about the lack of infrastructure provision offered to our road network and the impact the plan's various developments will have upon Maidstone's already worrisome air quality."

Mrs Whately added that the plan fails to address growing traffic problems and that developer contributions are needed to fund schemes such as a relief road between Leeds and Langley.

"I have urged Maidstone Council and the planning inspector himself to make changes, but they have just steamrolled on," she said.

If the secretary of state decides to 'call in' the local plan, an inspector will be appointed to carry out an inquiry.

Council to snap up further industrial site

A 28-unit light-industrial estate on Carlton Road in Cobbs Wood has been lined up by Ashford Borough Council as the latest addition to its corporate property portfolio.

It is the latest part of its move to acquire sites to generate income to combat cuts from central government funding.

It has previously bought office and industrial areas, as well as a town centre shopping complex.

Jail after £31,000 Asda salary fraud

A FRAUDSTER who stole £31,000 from an Asda store in Greenhithe has been jailed for two years.

Janette Norman, of Chaucer Way in Dartford, was working as the payroll clerk for the Asda store in Crossways Boulevard, when she began paying herself extra wages. She pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud.

Assault at bookies

POLICE are trying to track down a man who touched a woman inappropriately at a bookmakers in St Dunstan's Street, Canterbury earlier this month.

The incident occurred at around noon on September 3.

CCTV images have been released of the man. To see them visit www.kentnews.co.uk.

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GP crisis leads to surgeries planning new patient freeze

SOME seven GP practices in Folkestone plan to close their doors to new patients in a bid to maintain safe services.

Central Surgery, Guildhall Street, Hawkinge & Elham, Manor Clinic, The New Surgery, Park Farm Surgery and Sandgate Road Surgery have all taken "unprecedented" action of applying to the local clinical commissioning group for a formal list closure.

The doctors say a national GP crisis has been acutely felt in the seaside town, with a shortage of some 16 full time equivalent GPs.

It comes after Folkestone East Family Practice, which serves nearly 5,000 patients announced earlier this year it was to close in November.

Constituency MP Damian Collins



said: "The existing GP practices in the town have made clear that they require extra resources, above and beyond the funding per patient they receive, if they are to take on the responsibility for the care of more

people."

A spokesman for South Kent Coast CCG said: "These applications will be considered by the CCG and we will reply to the practices within 21 days."

Hornby CEO to quit as it tries to get back on track

TROUBLED firm Hornby, best known for its model railways, has lost another chief executive, in the space of 18 months.

The company, which is behind the Scalextric and Airfix brands and is based at the Discovery Park in Sandwich, after moving out of its long-time home in Margate, said that Steve Cooke was to leave at an unspecified date in the future.

It comes after Phoenix Asset Management took control of the toymaker and commenced a review of the firm's strategy.

Mr Cooke took over the reins in April 2016.

Interim chairman David Adams said: "The position of Phoenix as Hornby's majority shareholder represents a new chapter in the development of the group and the board is

working closely with Phoenix to set the direction of the business going forward."

Shares slumped nearly four per cent when the news was announced.

Earlier this year Phoenix took full control of Hornby, and said at the time that it intends to develop an understanding of the group and its longer-term strategy as it looks to deliver earnings growth following the completion of a turnaround strategy.

Hornby's turnaround has seen it reduce product ranges and cut back on investment as part of plans to shore up the balance sheet.

But only last week the group said trading has fallen short of expectations amid increased competition.

Cheque con warning

A WARNING has been issued after tricksters conned a woman in her 90s in Tonbridge into writing out a large cheque.

The two men visited an address in London Road at the end of last month where they deceived the occupant and withdrew a large sum of money.

Council tax changes poll

RESIDENTS in Sevenoaks are being asked for their views on proposed changes to a council tax support scheme which helps those on low incomes pay the bill.

For details of the changes visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ctsurvey. The survey runs until October 20.

Have dinner with Widdy

FORMER Maidstone MP and Strictly star Ann Widdecombe will be the guest at a special charity dinner in Tenterden later this year.

Hearing charity Hi Kent will stage the event at the London Beach Hotel on November 3. Tickets are on sale now.

United star's store visit

FORMER Manchester United and England defender Gary Pallister returned to the county this week to open a home improvement and garden store.

Pallister, who was born in Ramsgate, was in Broadstairs on Tuesday to open Kent's second Bunnings Warehouse.

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HS1's £300m visitor boost

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE county's high speed rail network has contributed more than £300m to the local visitor economy, new research has found.

The train line, which has run from London's St Pancras International via international stations in Ebbsfleet and Ashford for 10 years, boosted the county's economy by almost £73m last year alone.

HS1 Ltd, the company that owns and operates High Speed 1 (HS1), has released the findings of the new wave of consumer research by Visit Kent and Destination Research Ltd, which shows the full extent of the rail line's contribution to the last decade of growth for Kent.

Since 2010, leisure journeys to the county via HS1 have increased almost nine-fold from 100,000 to 890,000 in 2016, with around of third of Kent visitors citing HS1 as having influenced their decision to choose the county, while some 47 per cent of all rail visitors to the county travelled via the HS1 service.

For every leisure journey made in 2016, £81.65 was added to the local economy – a total of £72.7m, with the total economic impact since 2007 standing at a massive £311m.



POPULAR: The fast train service is now a key driver of the county's tourism economy

HS1's activity has also led to the creation and support of 5,766 tourism sector jobs in Kent, and almost three quarters of tourism businesses in the county believe that leisure tourism has increased as a result of HS1.

Kent's visitor economy is now worth £3.6bn, with the county welcoming more than 60 million visitors

in 2015.

Jonathan Neame, chairman of the county's destination management organisation, Visit Kent, said: "HS1 and the availability of high speed rail connections to London has played a huge role in our county's growth, as our tourism businesses have said themselves.

"Many organisations continue to

work together to create a single strategy for tourism that helps stimulate ongoing investment in transport, accommodation and attractions so that Kent's visitor economy continues to thrive."

The research was conducted over a four-month period, using train path statistics as well as data gathered from tourists and Kent businesses.

FGM part of border patrol

AN OPERATION aimed at protecting children and vulnerable people from harmful practices and human trafficking took place at Ebbsfleet International station this week.

Kent Police was part of a multi-agency day of action where officers looked for people travelling to or from the UK who may have been a victim of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and child abuse linked to faith or belief.

The force was joined by colleagues from the Met Police, British Transport Police and UK Border Force, with officers also at St Pancras.

£27m library set to open

A £27m project to refurbish and expand the biggest library in the county is nearing completion at the University of Kent.

The 1960s-built Templeman Library at the Canterbury campus, which houses more than one million books and journals, will be ready for the start of the new academic term this month, after increasing in size by 5,000 square metres. It will be formally opened early next year.

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G4S under fire again as MP calls for crunch talks

Vital patient transport service gets more than 100 complaints a month as KCC prepares to discuss the concerns

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

PATIENTS across the county have lodged a staggering 1,774 complaints against G4S' patient transport service in just over a year, it has emerged.

The healthcare services arm of the multinational security company won a six-year £90m contract to provide non-emergency transport last summer but the service has been mired in controversy ever since.

Eyebrows were raised when health bosses shook hands on a deal with G4S, which had been criticised for the service it provided at the Olympic Games in London in 2012, and was also stripped of its contract to run the Medway Secure Training Centre in Rochester, following allegations of abuse.

Nevertheless, it was chosen as the preferred company by West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to provide free travel for people whose medical condition prevents them get-

ting to and from hospital by other means, after previous supplier NSL withdrew a bid to continue running the service after also coming under intense criticism.

Figures released in a report by the CCG, which runs the contract, are due to be discussed by Kent County Council's Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee next week, and reveal the alarming extent of the complaints received - most of which, it claims, are regarding timeliness of journeys for outpatient appointments.

The report presented to councillors shows G4S received a massive 232 complaints in its first month of operating the service, in July 2016.

While the number of complaints did not reach that level again in any of the subsequent 12 months, only three times were there fewer than 100 lodged in a single month.

Health bosses note that the most recent figures, from July 2017, show there were 115 complaints, which it describes as "a small improvement" on May and June when there were 141 and 146 respectively.



CONCERNED: MP Greg Clark says he is worried about the service

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk



CONTROVERSIAL: G4S' reputation has taken a knock in recent years and there are growing concerns over its handling of vital transportation services to our hospitals

On average, G4S receives around 136 complaints per month, something which Tunbridge Wells MP and business secretary Greg Clark insists isn't anywhere near good enough.

He said: "When G4S took over the contract for patient transport services last year we were promised a better service but this hasn't happened.

"The patients that use this service are often very unwell and need regular medical appointments - it is crucial to their health that they can rely on getting to these. The number of complaints that G4S has received is alarming.

"I have called a meeting with G4S and West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group to find out how they have got into this mess and, more importantly, how they are going to sort it out."

The company has also been issued with an official warning by health chiefs over the service it has provided over the past year, meaning it could be in line for a financial penalty if performance does not noticeably improve.

The report by the CCG noted: "A contract performance notice was issued in July 2017 regarding the provider's complaints process.

"The CCG are concerned about the unprecedented levels of complaints regarding the service and the way in which G4S are handling and responding to complaints.

"The commissioners sought urgent action to rectify the common themes emerging from complaints and to im-

prove the complaints process so that complaints are managed in a timely, professional manner."

It added that a remedial action plan has been drawn up and will address issues including a review of G4S' complaints policy, a review of the complaints process as a whole, improving reporting and response times and identifying themes and learning.

Teresa Murray is deputy leader of the Labour group on Medway Council and has long voiced concerns over the quality of service provided by G4S.

She told KoS she'd prefer to see smaller, local firms win contracts rather than multinational companies.

"I opposed it being given the contract in the first place," she said.

"It was given 18 months ago when NSL failed to meet the terms of the contract but they already had a bad reputation, they'd just lost the contract at the secure training centre.

"Are we really happy that they took another publicly-funded contract? The level of contract monitoring is poor.

"When it comes to these contracts, why does it always have to be one of these big companies? Why not use local firms who know the area and know the hospitals and would do a much better job?

"They managed to take the contract off NSL when everything went so badly wrong but quite often what happens is we end up paying for these

mistakes. You get a great big bill and the public purse pays twice."

A so-called masterplan for health services across Kent and Medway, known as the sustainability and transformation plan, is currently being drawn up and is set to go out to public consultation next year.

In it, health chiefs are outlining proposals to allow people to be treated nearer their own homes to help reduce the strain on hospital services, which in some areas of the county have been described as at breaking point.

Cllr Murray added: "The plan sounds good in principle but are G4S going to play ball? It's not as if the CCG didn't know this was coming down the track.

"They say they didn't know how frail patients would be, that they didn't have enough wheelchairs, and that's unacceptable."

Russell Hobbs, managing director of transport services at G4S, said: "We are resolutely committed to patient care and delivering a good service to all those who use our non-emergency patient transport service.

"When the level of service provided is not good enough, we always apologise, deal with any issues and seek to improve the service.

"We are improving the way we deal with complaints and have put in processes to ensure we monitor journeys, have dedicated points of contact and proactively manage future appointments where we aware there has been a problem."



PAST: How the airport used to look. Today the site in Thanet it is in a state of decline as the wrangle over its future continues.

Fresh war of words over Manston presentation to council chiefs

Tom Pyman also unearths a stinging email from local MP Sir Roger Gale to leader of county council

KENT County Council has been accused of lacking "courage" in a row over the future of Manston Airport.

The local authority's growth, economic development and communities cabinet committee was due to receive presentations last week by two big players in the airport saga, with differing views on how the land should be used.

Councillors were set to be presented with a vision for aviation use on the site by RiverOak Strategic Partners (RSP), which has recently concluded a consultation into its plans, in which it outlines ambitions to re-open Manston as an air freight hub, pledging to create some 30,000 jobs by 2020.

It is working to obtain a development consent order (DCO) and an application is expected to be submitted before the end of the year.

Members were also expected to receive a presentation from representatives of Stone Hill Park (SHP), which wants to provide some 2,500 homes and leisure facilities on the site, and last year submitted a planning application to Thanet District Council, which is still currently being considered by officers.

However, SHP chiefs decided to pull the plug on the presentation at the eleventh hour, and KCC then decided to also postpone the appearance of RSP as well, claiming, perhaps understandably, it would make more sense for the committee to be presented with both sides at the same meeting.

Indeed, senior figures at the coun-

cil, including leader Paul Carter, have chosen to maintain something of a distance from the heated debate in recent months.

County Hall passed a motion in July 2015 which said: "We the elected members of KCC wish it to be known that we fully support the continued regeneration of Manston and east Kent and will keep an open mind on whether that should be a business park or an airport, depending upon the viability of such plans and their ability to deliver significant economic growth and job opportunity".

Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale, however, who has been at the forefront of the campaign to return the site to aviation use, was left fuming at the decision to prevent RSP from presenting to the council.

He told us: "I can see no reason whatsoever why RiverOak should not be allowed and encouraged to make a presentation to the council, so they can be informed as to their aspirations and intentions.

"They are not mutually exclusive. It's not an election campaign. What are they afraid of? Surely county councillors can exercise their own judgement?"

"I can't see any justification for taking an agenda item off the agenda. The leader and the cabinet should have the courage to allow RiverOak to make the presentation and judge for themselves."

Sir Roger also pointed out that Dover District Council had received a presentation from RSP back in July, without an accompanying exhibition

by the SHP team.

It is not the first time the Conservative MP has been at odds with senior councillors of the same party over Manston, however.

In an exchange of emails seen by KoS following a Freedom of Information request, Sir Roger threatened to publicly question Cllr Carter's status as a senior representative of the party prior to the county council election earlier this year.

He said: "I wish to know whether you support our local Conservative councillors and Conservative county council candidates in their determination to see Manston re-opened as an airport or whether you support Ukip in their desire to see the site developed for housing.

"If the former then please say so publicly. If the latter then I cannot see that you have any authority to represent the Conservative Party at County Hall in the run up to the county council elections and I shall have to pursue that line further and equally publicly."

The Ukip leader of Thanet District Council, Chris Wells, has repeatedly said the local authority remains open to the possibility of the site returning to aviation use if "a credible investor" comes forward.

In his reply to the MP, Cllr Carter said: "My position and that of the county council is unchanged and very well summarised in the resolutions that were passed.

"It is not for the county council to determine whether a change of use is permitted - that is for Thanet District



CROSS: Sir Roger was unhappy with Cllr Carter's stance on airport Council."

The Tories strolled to victory in May's election, winning 67 of the 81 seats available at County Hall and Sir Roger has not since publicly questioned his authority, though he has suggested Cllr Carter "does not represent the views of Conservative members of east Kent" - a criticism laughed off by the council leader.

In response, Cllr Carter told us: "There's good logic to it. What I understand to be the case is that Stone Hill Park were conscious that the draft Thanet local plan is yet to be launched and until that time they would rather not disclose details.

"Politically it's quite contentious and it's sensible to give them equal time. We want to play it with a straight bat."

A KCC spokesperson added: "About

a week before the cabinet committee meeting scheduled for September 6, KCC received a request from the owners of Stone Hill Park for their presentation to be deferred to the next meeting on November 21.

"They had made significant changes to previous plans in the light of the public consultation they had conducted and felt it would be more helpful to the cabinet committee if their presentation focused on these rather than what they had previously announced."

Their request was as follows: "Stone Hill Park will be delighted to present to Kent County Council the full details of their plans, but are at present in the process of including additional detail of a technical nature, which will add to the overall design quality.

"A short delay in their presentation to Kent's elected councillors would ensure that they are informed of Stone Hill Park's complete plan, which will allow them to gain an in depth understanding of our ambitions for the former Manston Airport site."

The council spokesperson added: "KCC felt it sensible to move the other connected presentation, from RiverOak Strategic Partners, to the same date so they could be considered together.

"A decision by Dover District Council to hear the RiverOak presentation on its own is not a matter for KCC comment."

A spokesperson for Stone Hill Park told us its plans were still progressing as scheduled.

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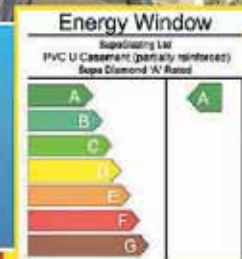
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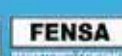
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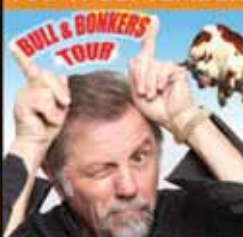
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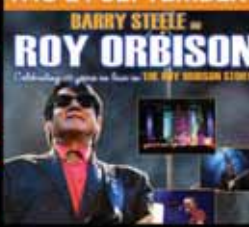
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MEP warns Brexit may not spell the end of animal exports

Campaigners have pinned their hopes on an exit from the EU allowing us to change our law on the animal export trade. But it may not be quite as simple as they expect, a leading figure has warned during a week of major protests

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

BREXIT is "unlikely to be the silver bullet that halts live exports", a south east MEP has warned.

Keith Taylor of the Green Party reiterated his call for an outright ban on the controversial trade as he joined campaigners on the Live Animal Transportation International Day of Awareness this week.

Exports recently resumed through the Port of Ramsgate.

Mr Taylor, the vice president of the European Parliament's intergroup on the welfare and conservation of animals, which debates and promotes ethical treatment for animals and is open to all MEPs, took part in a group action

in Strasbourg as campaigners across the world come together in opposition to the trade.

The senior Green politician also recorded a video message played during Wednesday's Stop Live Transport rally in Parliament Square, London.

South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay earlier this year blamed "the big boot of the EU" for blocking Britain's ability to stop the trade, and said leaving the EU would allow greater control.

Mr Taylor, however, claims Brexit will not necessarily bring an end to the industry, which has seen a number of shipments passing through Ramsgate in recent months - shipments campaigners say see animals shipped in unhealthy conditions.

The MEP said: "Live exports are barbaric and I'm so pleased to stand alongside passionate and dedicated campaigners not just in my

PORT'S BATTLE WITH THE TRADERS

RAMSGATE has found itself at the centre of the live animal export trade after a high profile, and highly expensive, legally challenge spectacularly backfired.

Banned from the cross-Channel ferry operators back in 1994 amid mounting public outcry, because the trade is not illegal there is nothing ports with suitable berths can do to prevent facilitating it if required.

Under European law, any such restriction on free movement of goods is forbidden.

As Thanet District Council found to its cost. After an incident at the port almost exactly five years ago, more than 40 sheep transported in appalling conditions had to be destroyed before they could be loaded on board a waiting vessel. Those behind the transportation

were heavily fined and, such was the backlash, the local authority imposed a ban on the use of the council-owned port being used for such shipments.

However, the case ended up in the High Court where Thanet council lost and were subsequently ordered to pay £2.3 million in compensation plus a further £272,000 in legal costs to the exporters, out of public coffers.

The High Court ruled that, by imposing the suspension, Thanet council had acted in breach of section 35 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) which states that 'quantitative restrictions on exports, and all measures having equivalent effect, shall be prohibited between member states'.

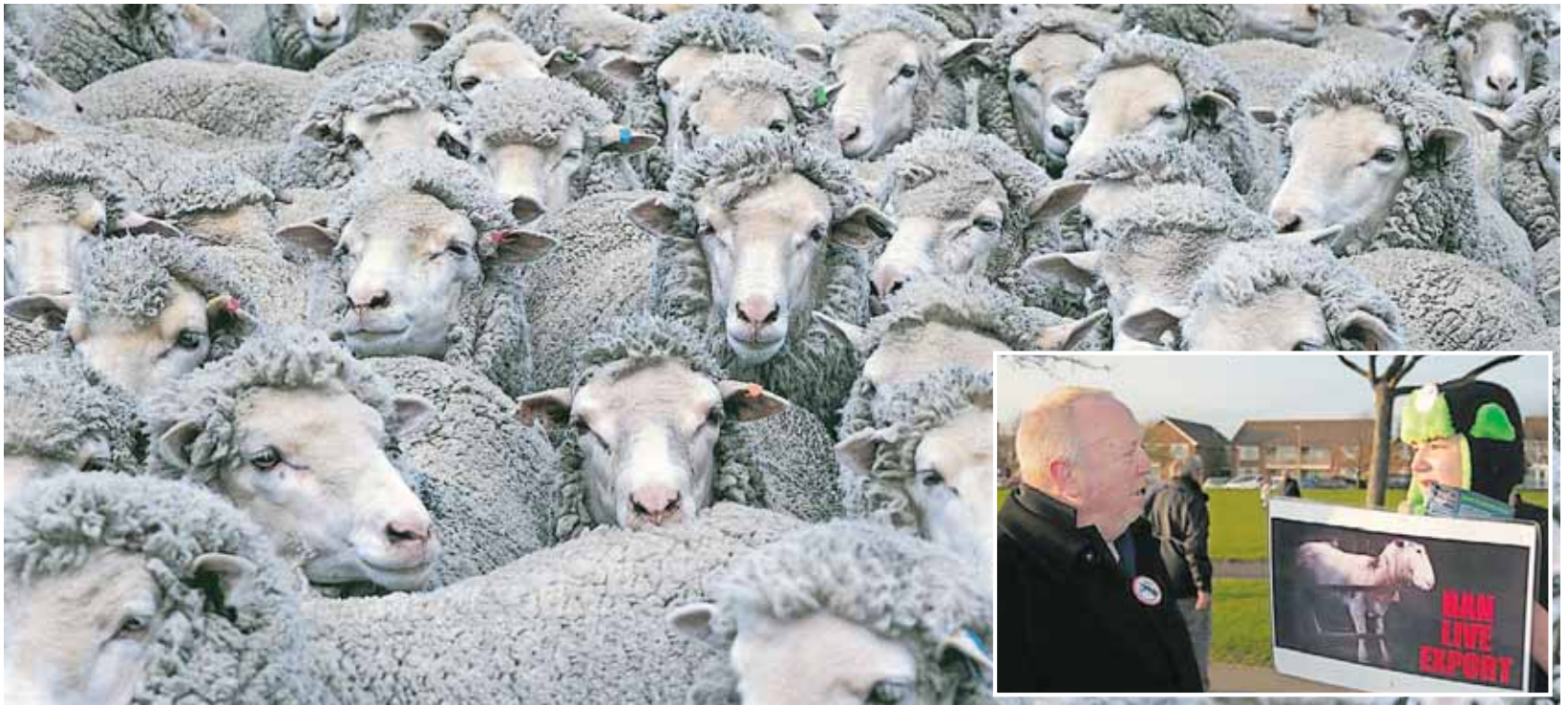
As a consequence, the irregular service continues. Due to regular protests,

the timings of the shipments are kept as tight wraps, with campaigners often only finding out hours in advance that a vessel is due to dock.

Most are transported on the MV Joline - a ship protestors say is unsuitable for carrying animals. The situation is made worse by the fact sailing from Ramsgate adds further time the animals are on the water.

However, farmers who trade in livestock say the trade is legitimate and should not be stopped - although agreeing that conditions on board cross-Channel ferries should be improved.

The animals - primarily sheep - are often shipped alive so they can either graze in the country of destination prior to slaughter - and therefore the meat is fresher - or are shipped directly to slaughterhouses.



constituency, where hundreds have turned out in Kent to stand against live animal transportation, but across Europe and the world.

"Live exports treat beautiful and sentient animals as goods as if they're no different from a bottle of whiskey or bar of chocolate. Greens want to see it banned outright.

"All this suffering is entirely unnecessary. And, following the tumultuous EU referendum last year, there has been a misplaced buzz of excitement amongst British animal welfare activists that leaving the EU might finally offer an

opportunity to ban live exports outright.

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves: Brexit is unlikely to be the silver bullet that halts live exports."

Mr Taylor said that Britain will become an independent member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) after leaving the EU, but insisted at that point it could be expected that live animal exports will in fact increase rather than decrease.

"The WTO governs the conditions, rules, and regulation of trade between countries and gov-

ernments," he added.

"There are currently no grounds to restrict trade, as a member of the WTO, based on animal welfare objections.

"Other WTO member states, particularly those that profit from live exports, can challenge any proposed UK ban if they see it as a barrier to trade.

"Complicating this further is that it is entirely down to the UK government to explicitly include animal welfare standards in the language of future free trade agreements.

"We, therefore, as passionate, animal-loving Brits, need to continue fighting to strengthen animal welfare standards as members of the EU.

"We already have the necessary legislative tools at our disposal to help us in the fight — they were a gift from the EU, afforded to us by membership.

"We are stronger working with our friends and neighbours, and we can — and should — continue to fight as part of the EU with the strength that our membership brings."

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Latest bid to regenerate city site

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

A MULTI-million pound plan to transform part of Canterbury has been officially lodged with the city council.

Developer Linkcity has submitted an application to build at the former council-owned Serco depot and coach park in Kingsmead, as well as other adjacent pieces of land.

It is the latest attempt to finally deliver on the site after previous plans over the years have fallen through for a host of reasons.

Subject to planning permission, the leisure-led scheme known as Canterbury Riverside will create 80 new full time equivalent jobs and deliver a five or six-screen cinema, eight commercial units for cafes, bars and restaurants, a small convenience store and two smaller shops and a public square to host events and cultural activities.

It also aims to create 189 homes, 484 purpose-built student bedrooms, a new boat house and pontoon, an extension of the riverside pathway and improved access to the river and an undercroft car park and parking for bikes across the site.

Chairman of the council's regeneration and property committee, Ben Fitter-Harding, said: "Kingsmead is the last large development site in Canterbury.

"Bringing the area back to life is a

priority for us, because it has been run down for some time and an eyesore for people living nearby.

"We want to repay their patience by making it vibrant once again, so it's great to have reached this important milestone of the planning application being submitted.

"The project stretches back to the original Kingsmead development brief of 2004, and since then we have worked really hard to get to this point.

"There has been lots of pre-planning public consultation in the last couple of years as the plans have been put together and we know there is plenty of support for the project.

"If this scheme is granted planning permission, it represents a brilliant opportunity for us to attract visitors and shoppers and persuade them to stay in the city for longer.

"Businesses in Northgate should really benefit too, as footfall between Canterbury Riverside and the city centre is likely to be high.

"It would also mean residents will no longer need to travel to Westwood Cross, Ashford or Maidstone to enjoy a multi-screen cinema experience.

"At the moment, we only retain 39 per cent of the potential cinema audience."

Some people have recently questioned the need for more purpose-built student accommodation in the city, but Cllr Fitter-Harding said it is an important way to improve the number of affordable family homes in



PLANS: How the site at Kingsmead will look if all plans go ahead

the district.

He said: "At the moment purpose-built student accommodation is home to 45 per cent of the 30,000 students studying in the city.

"Because Canterbury is a desirable place to live and the demand caused

by the need to house students, buying and renting property is more expensive than in the rest of east Kent.

"Affordability is a keen concern of new and existing residents and this is one of the many ways we can tackle it."

Hoardings will soon be put up around the site as demolition crews get ready to pull down the some of the existing buildings for public safety reasons.

This work is required regardless of the outcome of the planning process.

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Clipper service's £6m+ price tag

Commuters lapped up the chance to travel by boat into central London this week during a special trial period, but hopes of a permanent service on the Thames faces some major investment hurdles

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

AMID all the debate and discussion over capacity on our roads and rail, a trial run concluded on Thursday into a commuter service down the River Thames.

But despite it being a huge success - with all the, free, tickets being snapped up for the week-long trial in advance - those behind the service between Gravesend and central London warn establishing a permanent route would not come cheap.

The clipper service whisked people from Gravesend Town Pier to Embankment, next door to Charing Cross, in one hour and 10 minutes, with stops at the likes of Canary Wharf and Blackfriars en route.

With the opportunity to buy coffee or stroll on the open deck, it made a change to the regular trek on over-crowded trains or congested roads.

The trial was conducted by MBNA Thames Clippers, which already runs regular daily services between the centre of London and Greenwich, in order to "understand demand".

Explained its chief executive officer Sean Collins: "The trial has been a total success. Passengers have been asking a lot of questions to find out when a permanent service could be up and running and how much it will cost.

"These questions are the reason we are running this trial, I set up this company 18 years ago, and two years later people were asking me about a Gravesend service. The only reason we haven't done anything sooner is because we've been working on other projects across London.

"We need to set out a full business case. It could take up to two years to start up a service and it would be great to see it stop at other places, such as Erith, Greenhithe, Dagenham and Thurrock."

The big issue, of course, will be just how much it will cost. Currently a season ticket from Greenwich to central London on the clipper service costs a little over £1,200. A standard rail season ticket from Gravesend to Charing Cross, just over £3,300. Journey times are comparable.

But some considerable investment would need to be made first.

Mr Collins says not only would new boats need to be purchased, but major infrastructure upgrades too; most notably with the creation of suitable facilities at piers for each new stop.

The CEO explained: "This week's trial has seen 220-capacity boats run to and from the capital.

"Because of demand we'd need to build at least two bigger boats, at around 300 capacity. They would cost around £6 million each and then there's the cost of running to consider.

"By having new, bespoke boats, the journey time wouldn't be longer, but for now the idea of additional stops is something we would have to evaluate



TRIAL: The Clipper service was warmly welcomed by Gravesend VIPs, right, but CEO Sean Collins, below, warns the cost of setting up a regular route will cost millions and require some major infrastructure investment before it could launch.

in a business plan, as we would have to bring in the cost of setting up dedicated piers for the service."

With a proposed multi-billion pound theme park on the Swanscombe peninsula still on the cards - albeit it constantly delaying its opening date - the appetite for river travel is only likely to increase.

Those behind the park - formerly known as London Paramount and now, since the movie studio pulled out, simply London Resort - have always said they want to exploit the potential of using the river to ferry people to and from the park.

Certainly there's an appetite among local decision makers.

A spokesperson from Gravesend Borough Council said: "We support everything MBNA Thames Clippers are doing and would welcome a regular service from Gravesend."

■ **What do you think? Would you rather use a river route to access London? And could it be extended even further down the Thames? Share your views and join the debate. Email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or write to The Editor, KoS, Room G46, The Panorama, Park Street, Ashford, TN24 8EZ.**





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Hops provide the glue to a harvest of community spirit

Hundreds of people in a coastal town have spent the year growing hops and on Thursday they gathered them in as part of a remarkable unified effort

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AN innovative community project which has seen nearly 200 people in one small coastal town grow hops across a range of sites in a bid to help create its very own beer saw the fruits of its labours reach harvest this week.

And it comfortably exceeded expectations, with almost three times the amount of hops predicted being collected.

Instead of a large single field full of plants, the Deal Hop Farm instead adopted a patchwork approach, with dozens of people across the coastal town all doing their bit on their own land.

The project is the brainchild of the Deal With It group - a community organisation trying to minimise the impact on the environment and tackle climate change in the area.

It hopes the hop project will not only demonstrate the power of the community when combined, but also

allow them to produce their own brand of beer, after joining forces with a local brewery.

It was only launched in January this year, when several locals expressed a passion for growing hops - now it is possibly the largest of its kind in the UK.

Explained chief hopinista Steve Wakeford: "It has grown into a patchwork farm of 130 sites.

"These are in peoples' gardens, allotments, community gardens and spaces, including English Heritage's kitchen garden at Walmer Castle.

"In a little over nine months the group has become one of the largest community growing projects in the country with nearly 200 people involved."

"We are totally overwhelmed by the response of our members, and the wider community in Deal, to our first green hop harvest.

"We had an amazing 75kgs of hops picked and collected - three times our best hopes.

"This is a fantastic effort and shows what an awesome community we have here. People are rightly proud of

Kent's hop heritage and how important local food and drink are to our wellbeing."

He added: "The harvest went very well despite the various challenges from the weather and logistics.

"We were able to pick most of our hops on Thursday and then had them available for brewing very early on Friday with our partners at the Ripple Steam Brewery.

"The Landmark Garden in the High Street was our main base for people to drop off their picked hops for weighing.

"There were also facilities for hop pickers to collect them from gardens of people who were away for the harvest."

So far this year, the Deal Hop Farm has had them growing in 102 individual gardens, 15 allotment sites, the community gardens at the Landmark Community Centre and Deal Rail Station, English Heritage's Historic Kitchen Garden at Walmer Castle, local charity the Martha Trust, Ripple Steam Brewery, Bay Trust, two pubs, one café, one bed and breakfast and even at a pre-school

group.

As the group does not have its own oast house, the hops will not be dried but used as what are known as 'green hops' which organisers hope will give a "massive flavour burst" to the beer. The hops they have grown were developed locally at Wye College; they are the dwarf variety known as Prima Donna (First Gold) - a variation of the Whitbread golding variety.

Expected on the shelves by the end of October, the beer will be called Hopping MAD (Made Around Deal). It is being brewed by the Ripple Steam Brewery which termed the project "fantastic". It says it expected to produce around 2,800 pints which will be split between cask and bottled conditioned beer.

But it is the positive community impact which has impressed so many.

Member of the collective and hop grower Charlotte Daly explained: "I have been amazed at the cross section of people involved in this project. It has brought people together in a way I never thought possible."

And Colin Kidd, a fellow member added: "It has been a very difficult



year for me personally but this project has really been important to me as a result. I have learned a lot but more than that, I have found friendship and fun in this joyous community project."

Mark Brent is English Heritage's head gardener at Walmer Castle and Gardens which played its role in the project: "From the beginning the objectives of Deal Hop Farm have been



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CROPS: Young and old alike have been involved in the process which will result in a beer being brewed by a local firm which will go on sale next month. Such has been the success of the project it is believed to be one of the most successful of its kind in the country.

to learn, nurture and grow hops; with the prospect of some quality beer as an eventual outcome. What has been equally pleasurable to witness is its role in growing new friendships amongst the community too.

"Taking part in this project has been a great experience, I am very pleased to have been able to support Deal Hop Farm and I look forward to doing so in future."

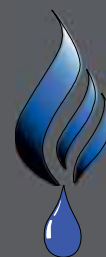
Retired school teacher Tim Hughes

added: "This is a fantastic project which has brought the community together on a very practical way. We are so much more than a drinking club with a serious gardening problem."



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Setting sail on cementing town's relationship with sea

Gordon Vincent, founder and chair of Whitstable Maritime on how the group is looking at a host of projects including the renovation of a classic oyster yawl

THREE years ago Whitstable Maritime emerged on to the town's scene with the announcement it had purchased a 100 year-old oyster yawl built on the town's Island Wall.

There is nothing pretty about the Gamecock: she is a work boat. The craft had previously been used locally for oyster dredging. She has most of her original fittings and is one of the very few Whitstable oyster yawls still afloat.

Built in 1907, 41 feet long, and with a good provenance, she has been registered as a National Historic Vessel.

Her working life was spent dredging in the Swale estuary where she was moored to a metal screw driven in to the hard sea bed.

Storms and collisions were not unknown and the Swale can be rough when the North Sea is blowing on to the shore as the residents of Whitstable have found to their cost.

Twice the Gamecock was hit while owned by Bill Coleman and he repaired her, as was the custom, by

adding a second layer to the hull.

Similarly, money was saved by storing sails and other gear below deck in the months when oysters were out of season. So, the boat and its owner struggled on. Now Whitstable Maritime, struggles to keep her afloat away from the deadly clutches of the soft silt of the Swale's creeks where many a craft has found a grave.

Will the Gamecock make or break us?

The charity was formed three years ago and its first action was to purchase the boat. However it also aims to establish a Maritime Discovery Centre, an interactive coastal trail from Whitstable to Faversham, and an annual maritime festival.

The overall purpose is to celebrate the town's connections with the sea; past, present and future.

Restoring the Gamecock differs from the other three programmes in that its costs are unpredictable as owners of historical craft will testify. How much of the hidden timbers have been eaten by large fat worms? What strength of wind-on-sail will crack

the mast weakened by rot?

While some of the work can be undertaken by volunteers, such as painting, some requires supervision, such as caulking, while other tasks need the skills of a shipwright, such as the steaming of planks. One of our volunteers has been inspired to train at the International Boatbuilding Training College at Lowestoft and now leads the task group.

Then there are the ongoing expenses of moorings and insurance. This is when you need friends, friends who are equally committed, such as Swale Marina which consistently subsidises the mooring fees.

Why then take the risk?

The Gamecock is more than a flagship; it is an inherent part of the community's maritime heritage and when fully restored it could once again be used for dredging oysters. Not only will this be a contribution to responsible tourism in the area, and an opportunity for 'Red Letter' days, but it will also encourage a more environmentally acceptable way of dredging oysters from the sea-bed.

A power dredger can scrape a sea-

bed of oysters until they disappear in a few hours. If dredging in the Thames and other estuaries was limited to sail this more gentle method would lead to a regeneration of all fish species and a more sustainable form of aquaculture.

The Gamecock also participates in an annual barge/smack race which Whitstable Maritime has helped promote over the past three years with the Kentish Sail Association.

This year the race formed part of a nautical festival organised by Whitstable Maritime and attended by several thousand people. A dozen craft participated, only to be becalmed before the start of the race.

The eventual winner was the Emmeline, a sister craft to the Gamecock which has been substantially modified into a beautiful yaught.

When in the harbour the tall masts added to the picturesque scene of fishing boats, stalls and lifeboats.

Over two dozen stalls were arranged along the quays, each with a maritime theme. The Margate all-weather lifeboat joined the local inshore craft and the Sea Scouts organ-



ised boat rides around the harbour. Scaled models of many of the local craft were on display.

Parents and offspring competed for the devices to control the models in the temporary boating pool. The event was a great success and another is planned for August 11, next year.

It is an aspiration of Whitstable Maritime that many of these activities form part of the programme offered by a permanent Maritime Dis-

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PROJECT: Whitstable Maritime has set itself a number of targets, among them the renovation of the oyster yawl the Gamecock, above, as well as a host of attractions to help boost Whitstable's appeal (harbour pictured right) while educating locals and visitors about its relationship with the sea. Above picture: Gavin Atkin/www.intheboatshed.net

covery Centre.

The centre would provide enjoyable opportunities for visitors and students to explore the town's connections with the sea through six themes: The impact of man and nature on the coastline; fish and shellfish from sea to plate; marine industries past, present and future;

seamanship and navigation; a coastal trail; alternative energy and new technologies.

This would strengthen Whitstable's future appeal as a visitor destination and advance the education of school children, students and adults.

A pontoon to assist with embarkation is being installed in the harbour

and it is realistic to envisage the programme being delivered in the centre, on the foreshore, and afloat.

No longer will visitors walk along the beach unaware that it is a recent artificial creation built to defend the town from storms.

They will discover buried beneath their feet the slipways of half-a-dozen



boatyards, including that of the Collier Brothers where the Gamecock was built.

Countering the rising sea-level presents both challenges and opportunities which students can consider in problem-solving simulations using satellite data. The opportunities for enriching the learning of all ages and abilities are manifold and a public consultation undertaken last year by Canterbury City Council resulted in a strong endorsement of the proposal for a centre by the local community.

How rapidly the vision promoted by Whitstable Maritime is realised largely depends on the ability of the organisation to attract competent volunteers and adequate funding.

To date, the response from compa-

nies, charities, and public bodies has been encouraging and Whitstable Maritime has been recognised by the DCLG as a Coastal Community Team.

The charity has volunteers with expertise in boat-building, seamanship, architecture, marine ecology, tourism, education, IT, art and business and is looking to recruit more volunteers with different skill sets.

The town's expansion is limited geographically but building on its maritime heritage will add value and stimulate further growth in the local economy.

Meanwhile, the Gamecock requires more attention - and funding.

■ **For more information on Whitstable Maritime visit whitstablemaritime.co.uk.**



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IMPROVED: The Brook Theatre has been under wraps for the last year during maintenance work

Brook bounces back as it unveils £415,000 makeover

Victorian building completes external works as it's restored to former glory

ONE of Medway's leading theatres has stripped off its year-long scaffolding just in time to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

The Brook Theatre in Chatham has spent the last year wrapped up while it under went a major facelift worth £415,000.

And while it remained open as usual during the works, the essential repairs are now complete and it is fit to face the world again.

Among the work carried out was cleaning of the stonework and roof and improvements to the external lighting.

The last part of the renovation saw the three iconic clock faces repaired, cleaned and re-lit.

The Grade II-listed building itself was first opened back in 1900 and served a variety of purposes, most notably as Chatham Town Hall and

then Medway Arts Centre, before it was reopened as the 400-capacity Brook Theatre in 1997.

Medway Council, which funded the works, says the theatre is an important part of Chatham which is in the middle of its own ambitious regeneration programme to transform the area.

Medway Council's portfolio holder in charge of council property, Adrian Gulvin, said: "The works were essential to keep the building in good condition and fit for purpose – and the theatre really is looking great now it's been unveiled for all to see.

"We know lots of people, both locally and from further afield, enjoy coming to watch shows at The Brook Theatre and so it's important that we keep one of Medway's entertainment gems in good shape."

Councillor Howard Doe, portfolio

holder for community services, added: "As well as being the home for several professional creative companies, The Brook Theatre is also a place enjoyed by many groups within the community such as dance and drama schools and groups, so this is a really important venue in the heart of Medway. It is a measure of the council's commitment to the arts that such significant investment has been made and I must say it looks very smart indeed."

The theatre has a host of shows lined up over the coming weeks.

Among them are the visits of Dizzy O'Dare, the contemporary circus performance company. It is bringing its Cabaret of Curiosities Variety Night to the venue on September 29, before returning with its colourful and moving Rise on October 13.

And if that wasn't enough, it flies

back in on November 17 with its Burlesque Special.

The Baroque Theatre Company presents the classic The Three Musketeers on October 15, with the swashbuckling, fast-paced show designed to entertain all the family.

On October 21, comedy star Phill Jupitus brings his latest stand-up show, Jupicity, for a night of laughs, while Foster & Allen will celebrate 40 years together in the music business with a show on November 16 featuring all their favourites.

And between December 1-24 there will be the Brook Theatre Christmas show when The Lion Who Came for Christmas starts its festive residency with plenty of audience participation expected.

For the full details of upcoming shows, and to book, visit medwayticketslive.co.uk.

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Countdown begins to festival of food and drink at the seaside

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

FOOD lovers should head to the coast at the end of the month as a host of tasty treats take to the spotlight at the Broadstairs Food Festival.

The hugely popular annual event in Thanet has become one of the highlights of the calendar for foodies, drawn to its array of regional food and drink.

The event is staged at Victoria Gardens and the seafront promenade and features over 100 stalls boasting a whole range of local products.

Running from September 29 to October 1, last year saw more than 50,000 people flock to enjoy the stalls and a packed programme of events and tasting workshops.

In addition, there will be the Chefs' Theatre where a host of culinary experts will demonstrate their skills and inspire visitors.

Among the range of produce will be raw milk, organic vegetables, sourdough bread, Kent cheeses, pickles and preserves alongside award winning beers, ciders, spirits, and freshly cooked street-food.



ARRAY: The event runs from September 29 to October 1

A spokesman for the event explained: "Since the beginning, in 2009, our aim has been to celebrate and promote the amazing variety, quality and abundance of food and drink produced in Kent and to encourage people to buy local produce in the shops, farm shops and other farmers markets."

"The festival offers not just this but also the opportunity to meet the producers of that wonderful

cheese – or the baker of your speciality bread and pastries.

"What gives us that extra value is that we're a free festival."

"Anyone and everyone is welcome to come along and take part without being charged an entry fee."

The festival will also welcome back cookery book writers Lucy Cufflin and Catherine Phipps who will demonstrate recipes from

their books, signed copies of which will be on sale at the weekend.

For those who fancy getting inspired with something a little stronger, there's a gin workshop hosted by Julie Harmer who will talk through different ways to serve up the perennial favourite on the Saturday.

For full details to help you plan your trip see broadstairsfoodfestival.org.uk.

Why not meet the Gruffalo?

THE Gruffalo will return to the Kent Life Heritage Farm Park near Maidstone later this month.

The popular children's character will meet visitors on September 24.



Thomas gambles on future

MARK Thomas brings his brand of wit to the Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells on November 23 as his A Show That Gambles on the Future rolls into town.

The show, a sell-out at the Edinburgh Fringe, will also call in at Folkestone, Canterbury and Margate before the end of the year.

Jim's in with life story

COMIC Jim Davidson brings his autobiographical show 40 Years On to Folkestone's Leas Cliff Hall in November.

The star of stage and screen will perform at the venue on November 19



Historic riverside walk

TAKE a guided walk around Gravesend's historic riverside this Monday with local historian Christoph Bull.

It costs £15 and includes a meal at the Three Daws pub. Call the venue on 01474 566869 to book. The walk starts at 7pm at the General Gordon statue.

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Truly a Dire tribute band

THE magic of Dire Straits lives on courtesy of a leading tribute act - and it's heading to the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells next month.

Dire Straits UK perform the hits on October 5.



Good Deal at record fair

COLLECTORS will be flocking to the third Deal Record & CD Fair of the year on September 23 at the Astor Theatre.

Entry is free with a host of stalls from across east Kent exhibiting. The fourth edition for 2017 will be held on October 22.

It runs from 9.30am to 3.30pm.

Fat Friends' all-star line-up

THE star-studded Fat Friends - The Musical comes to Dartford's Orchard Theatre between April 9-14.

The cast includes Freddie Flintoff, Sam Bailey and Natasha Hamilton.



All Rise at Quarterhouse

A COMBINATION of circus, theatre, cabaret and surrealism arrives at Folkestone Quarterhouse on September 22 when Dissy O'Dare's Rise arrives.

Combining live music, theatre and a surreal, eclectic style, Rise is a poignant series of vignettes about the complexity of relationships.

Delve into the past as gallery returns in style

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

MAIDSTONE Museum will officially open its new gallery next month following a major refurbishment project.

Courtesy of a £78,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, plus support from the Maidstone Museums Foundation and local donors, the venue says it will deliver an "immersive experience" with a "multi-sensory blend of sights, sounds and smells as well as items to touch".

The Ancient Lives gallery will focus on the lives of everyday Egyptians and Greeks through a series of themed displays and interactive stations.

Among the attractions will be Ta-Kush, the only Egyptian mummy in the county, who died over 2,700 years ago. Her face has been reconstructed as the story of her life. There are also the results of recent CT scans and a short film about how she arrived in Kent.

The remarkable lid of her coffin with its coloured interior of the goddess Nut (pictured) will also be



on display for the first time ever following conservation.

Lyn Palmer, public programming manager at Maidstone Museum said: "We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund for this project and we're excited to unveil the new Ancient Lives gallery as a fantastic space that will inform and entertain."

"The new lift and ramps will also create a much fuller experience for our less able visitors who will be able to access areas that,

until now, have been out of reach."

The museum team worked closely with the Kent Association for the Blind to ensure the new space was developed to optimise the experience for visually-impaired visitors, with Maidstone Borough Council also funding the installation of a new lift and ramps to improve accessibility around the entire museum.

The new gallery will be open to the public from Tuesday, October 3. The museum's exhibition on board games ends on October 1.



SCIENCE: See how technology has shed light on mummy



VENUE: Maidstone Museum's gallery re-opens in October

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Act like a pro with these clever kitchen hacks

These simple techniques will save you time and effort and boost your flavours, discovers **Ella Walker**

DID you know scooping out an avocado with a spoon is not the way to go? Or that peeling garlic is a task you don't actually have to do?

Well, I didn't either - until I spent a day at the cookery school of Raymond Blanc's Michelin-starred hotel, Belmond Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons in Oxfordshire.

There, Raymond's friend, development chef and barbecue maestro, Adam Johnson shared some surprising pearls of wisdom - in between preparing perfectly-seasoned lamb ribs and vanilla-scented barbecued pineapple.

Go forth and use these tips in your own kitchen.

Cut out the wishbone: Roasting a chicken? Remove the wishbone before putting it in the oven. It'll make it far easier to carve up once it's been cooked.

Be brave with mussels: Try doing mussels on the barbecue or griddle pan - just whack the shells in an old colander and sit on the coals, or bundle them into a wire barbecue fish basket and grill.

Avoid peeling garlic: Hate peeling garlic and then having to wash up your crusher? You can skip these steps. Instead, get a microplane grater and just grate the garlic bulb - skin and all - directly into the pan. Most of the skin will fall off and any bits that do get through will be so tiny it won't matter if they're eaten.



AVOCADO: Put the spoon down. Step away from the spoon

Change how you season: If you're seasoning a piece of meat, fish or even vegetables, rather than apply your herbs and spices directly, season the chopping board instead. Pile your salt, pepper, herbs etc. on the board, add oil, then mix together, before spreading out in the rough shape of the meat/fish/veg you'll be seasoning. Place the meat on the board, press down, then flip and rub in so that both sides are coated evenly.

A pinch = a gram: In chef talk (and in recipes) a pinch of salt, means a gram of salt - which is a lot more than you might think. Try weighing it out and see.

Fork that avocado: Making guacamole? Instead of slicing and scooping the avocado flesh from its

skin, scrape it out with a fork - it saves time and means less mashing later.

Pineapple tenderises: If you've got a tough bit of meat, like a pork shoulder steak, marinate it overnight in a puree of pineapple, mango and papaya flesh. The meat will take on the flavours of the fruit, while the enzymes in the pineapple will tenderise it. Double whammy.

Chop herbs into chunks: Adding herbs to fresh salads? Keep the herb leaves chunky so you have something to bite on once served.

Cut your Camembert correctly: If you're baking a wheel of Camembert, carve slits only in the top of the cheese, not in the sides. That way you won't have Camembert leaking out or reduced to a runny mess.

Dance festival hops up

DANCE fans will be heading to Port Lympne later this month for the Southbeats Festival.

The wildlife park near Hythe will be hosting the one-day event on September 23 featuring some of the UK's biggest DJs and live acts across a number of stages.

Among those performing will be legendary dance duo Basement Jaxx. Tickets are on sale now.

Stained glass taster

TRY your hand at creating your own stained glass window with a special introduction to the skills at Whitstable's Horsebridge next month.

Stephen Harries will be holding taster days to learn the basics of cutting glass and soldering lead on October 1 and 29 and November 26.

It runs from 10.15am to 4.30pm and all equipment is provided.

Carrott all set to rock

JASPER Carrott is back with a new stand-up show which combines comedy and live music too.

Stand Up & Rock takes in Chatham's Central Theatre on April 19 next year and feature founding member of The Move and ELO, Bev Bevan plus a host of other top musicians.

Tickets for the show are already on sale priced between £26-27.50.

Eighties dream night

REMEMBER when we all wore Frankie Say t-shirts and Prince, Madonna and Michael Jackson ruled the airwaves?

Relive your youth at The Forum in Tunbridge Wells on October 14 with one of its regular Back to the 80s evenings, pumping out hits from the decade that defined a generation.

Tickets cost £7 in advance and £8 on the door. It starts at 8.30pm.

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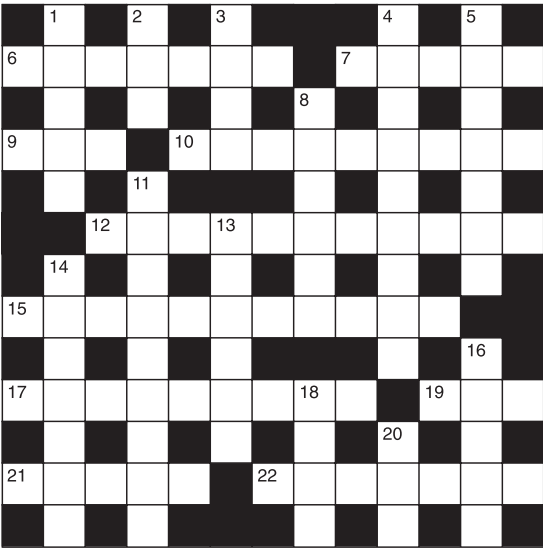
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PUZZLES

DOUBLE CROSSWORD



Quick

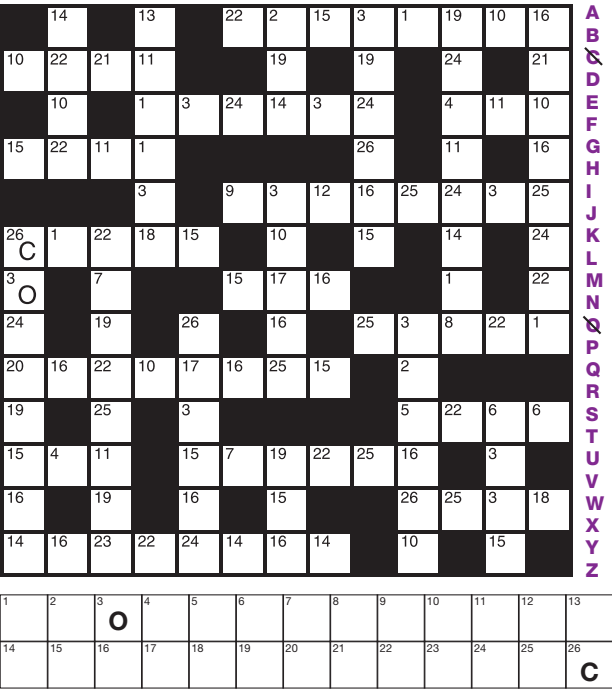
- Across**
- 6. Sundry (7)
 - 7. Inexpensive (5)
 - 9. Cover (3)
 - 10. Repulsive (9)
 - 12. Argument (11)
 - 15. Discontented (11)
 - 17. Building (9)
 - 19. Also (3)
- Down**
- 1. Lukewarm (5)
 - 2. Enclosure (3)
 - 3. Tardy (4)
 - 4. Shielded (9)
 - 5. Tackle (7)
 - 21. Set (5)
 - 22. Frightened (7)
- Cryptic**
- 6. Justice in Shakespeare is certainly not deep-seated (7)
 - 7 and 22Ac. Are they used in depicting a lakeland scene? (5,7)
 - 9. See 16 Down.
 - 10. Young groom can be trusted to be responsible (6,3)
 - 12. Play down the position of one subjected to nervous tension (5,6)
 - 15. Model exhibition (7,4)
 - 17. Blow for time in a well-contested match (5,4)
 - 19. Of reserved disposition, but have a fling (3)
 - 21. First to get the firearm ready (5)
 - 22. See 7 Across.

Cryptic

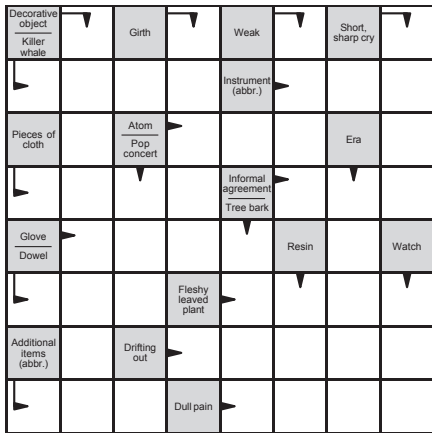
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- Down**
- 1. The Spirit of the Lough (7)
 - 2, 11Dn. and 3Dn. The whole crew suffering together (3,2,3,4,4)
 - 3. See 2 Down.
 - 4. Provides space and constructs part of the house (5,4)
 - 5. Compunction about a key method of communication (7)
 - 8. Lowers a foundation on to the top of the soil (6)
 - 11. See 2 Down.
 - 13. This will suffice to make one return with an expression of disgust (6)
 - 14. One who doesn't make the grade if a rule is broken (7)
 - 16 and 9Ac. Quick way one takes to get rid of long tresses (5,3)
 - 18. This affects how one feels at a reversal of fate (4)
 - 20. Fight a case (3)

CODEWORD

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.



Arrowword

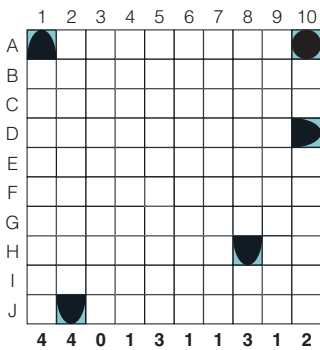


Enter your answers in the direction indicated by the arrows.

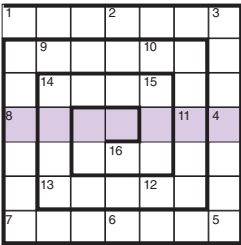
Battleships

Find where ships shown below are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some of the squares have been filled to start you off.

THE FLEET
1 x Battleship
2 x Cruiser
3 x Destroyer
4 x Submarine



Word Spiral

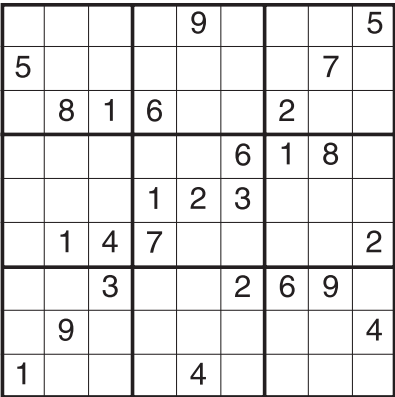


Starting from 1, fill in the grid clockwise with four-letter words. The last letter of each word becomes the first letter of the next to reveal the key word in the shaded boxes.

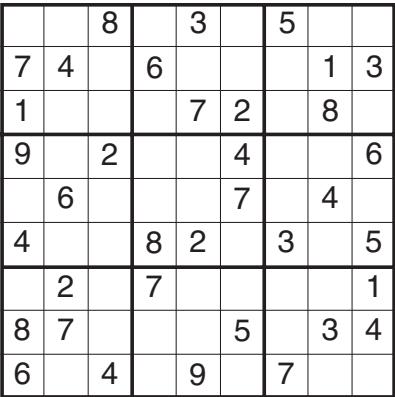
- 1. Cut with axe
 - 2. Tablet
 - 3. Board game
 - 4. Do as told
 - 5. Unit of length
 - 6. Twofold
 - 7. Sediment
 - 8. Complacent
 - 9. Percussion instrument
 - 10. Asian desert
 - 11. Wading bird
 - 12. Cleansing agent
 - 13. Treaty
 - 14. Fling
 - 15. Potato, slang
 - 16. Entrance
- Keyword clue:** A sign of the Zodiac

SUDOKU

Hard



Easy



Solutions

Double Crossword

1. The Spirit of the Lough (7)
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Arrowword

Decorative object: Killer whale
Girth
Weak
Short, sharp cry
Pieces of cloth
Atom Pop concert
Era
Glove
Dowel
Resin
Watch
Additional items (abbr.)
Drifting out
Dull pain
Fleshy leaved plant
Informal agreement
Tree bark
Instrument (abbr.)
Era

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Sudoku - Hard

Sudoku - Easy

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"Food and fast cars are taken extremely seriously and visitors can experience this daily and sometimes simultaneously"

An ancient road cuts across northwest Italy from the River Po to the Adriatic coast. Built by the Romans more than 2,000 years ago, the Via Emilia cuts through the heart of the Emilia Romagna region, one of the less visited corners of the country. Tourists have not traditionally been needed to support the local economy here. They're too busy making some of the most exciting cars - and food - in the world.

The plain is frequently referred to as the food valley or the motor valley. There are 10 cities, the most famous being Parma, Bologna and Modena. They are united in a quest for excellence on a modest scale. This is where Ferraris come from. And Maseratis. And Lamborghini. And Parma ham, Parmesan cheese, balsamic vinegar, tortellini and lasagna. It's an ideal destination to savour some of the things Italians are famous for.

Food and fast cars are taken extremely seriously and visitors can experience this daily and sometimes simultaneously. The region produces more than 40 foods with protected status, so they cannot be made anywhere else. One of the most famous is Parmesan cheese. Many dairies are open to the public including the

The forgotten VALLEY

The region that produces some of Italy's most celebrated cars and foods is not on the typical tourist map. Tony Green explores Emilia Romagna

organic dairy Hombro. Umberto Panini - the man who made a fortune creating the Panini football sticker empire - set up this farm outside Modena - it's the place where he settled down to make cheese (as one does). Guided farm tours start at 5EUR. The farm is also home to his collection of Maseratis. Write ahead to secure a visit.

CULINARY CAPITAL

Every culinary capital likes to debunk the myths surrounding whatever initially made them famous. Bolognese sauce is unheard of in Bologna. It's a ragu. And gastronomists who thought all they need do was make sure their balsamic vinegar came from Modena can think again. The real gourmets covet the aceto balsamico tradizionale - tradition being the key.

The good stuff is around 25 years old and fetches around £70 for 100ml. Because of the time it takes to make

and the modest quantities involved, it's a labour of love for most producers and foodies on a culinary pilgrimage can stay in one of several of agriturismo spots in the hills above Emilia Romagna. Cavazzone offers plenty of rustic charm. Try a two-hour pasta making workshop in English. Or you could just eat it.

Opera 02 is at the other end of the scale with chic modern design, an infinity pool and a handful of boutique-style rooms. As well as creating balsamic vinegar, its owner is trying to relaunch Lambrusco wine, an Italian offering that suffered severe reputational damage in the 1980s. Emilia Romagna is Lambrusco's home and producers are reintroducing the quality so readily abandoned decades ago. The Opera 02 wines are much more refined but it will be an uphill struggle to overtake Prosecco as the world's favourite fizz.



PETROL PASSION

The other great passion is motorsport. Tourists can head to the home of all of the supercar manufacturers who adopt a similar philosophy to the food producers: top quality on a small scale. There are bus tours that lap the Ferrari factory but a more satisfactory experience can be seen at the Museo Enzo Ferrari, designed by Renzo Piano.

Also try Museo Lamborghini. On show here are the Mura, one of the most beautiful cars ever designed and the prototype of the Urus, the next SUV supercar destined to make an appearance on the school run soon.

So that's Emilia Romagna, everything that's great about Italy. It's La Dolce Vita.

HOW TO GET THERE

- Fly to Bologna or Parma
- Easyjet flies direct from Gatwick to Bologna. Return fares average at £163.
- BA flies direct from Heathrow. Return fares average £190.

WHERE TO STAY

- La Cascina di Balsamico Bonini balsamicobonini.it; Opera 02 rooms opera02.it. Agriturismo Cavazzone cavazzone.it

WHAT TO DO

- Panini Motor Museum, paninimotormuseum.it
- Museo Enzo Ferrari, musei.ferrari.com/en/modena



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 circumstances, and a daytime
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Congratulations to the protestors

NATURE conservation partners including the RSPB and Kent Wildlife Trust, Rochester and Strood MP Kelly Tolhurst, and the many thousands of local people who wrote objecting to the development of Lodge Hill for housing are to be congratulated for their part in the fight to prevent the destruction of Lodge Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest for housing development [KoS, last week].

The clock is ticking for the future of wildlife in the UK.

Destroy the ecological chain, and the future for children being born today is bleak.

The year 2035 is not too far away, and unless we treat our environment properly we may have lots more houses but miserable living conditions. Many species of birds migrate thousands of miles throughout the year and it is our duty to ensure that the breeding habitats of Nightingales and other species are not compromised.

Yes, let us hope that Medway can develop a realistic vision for its community, which includes maintaining Lodge Hill as a nature reserve for all to enjoy

Jean Nobbs,
Sevenoaks

Anti-export gang miss the point

I AM amazed at the narrow minds of those who protest against live animal exports [KoS, letters, last week].

They are prepared to see this country go to the dogs by supporting Brexit just in order to bring a halt to the transportation of animals abroad.

They seem oblivious to the fact many farmers need to export live animals and therefore the trade will continue to exist. Hopefully, of course, the conditions will improve, but animals will still be shipped abroad.

But more significantly, Brexit is not worth it just to solve that issue - an issue I suspect few people are actually that actively bothered about. Brexit will ruin the prosperity for future generations who will not share the delights of those who hail the end of one minor trade and consider that a triumph.

T Watson,
Faversham

Let's just nuke North Korea

THE people of Kent have been on the front line for centuries. Now we see a delusional leader of an imprisoned North Korea threatening the free world. We must strike now and I believe we should nuke them. And then destroy the Chinese islands in

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Classic coastal decline needs cash injection

BRITAIN is dividing not only over Brexit but between the haves and have nots.

The haves are divided between the 10 per cent who have more than one property and the 40 per cent who have none.

Having no property limits any aspirations and coastal towns have substantial numbers of the 40 per cent [KoS, last week]. The MPs quoted are clearly more au fait with the needs of the 10 per cent than they are with the 40 per cent and it shows.

Forgetting Cllr Wells' comments about Manston, it will take years for it a defunct airfield to regenerate and create any jobs, duty free booze is not going to regenerate Dover and transport costs will eat substantially into any money received from a zero hours minimum wage job, so perhaps not going for work outside Thanet has some rationality.

Thanet and Dover are like so many areas left behind in post industrial Britain, where communities formed around staple industries. Work was

well paid, probably heavily unionised, but relatively inflexible. When the work went the communities went into prolonged mourning for 'the old days' and struggle to adapt. They close ranks, turn inward and start to self destruct. Educational attainment is poor because it will mean leaving the community to work or live outside.

The hospitality and horticultural industries are seasonal and not attractive to those seeking permanent work at regular hours.

Finally it comes down to money; the Coastal Community Fund is offering £40m for the whole of England, but the need is 1,000 times greater.

What will regenerate our part of the coast is consistent long term public and private investment, not house building or vanity projects which do not improve skills, improve connectivity or deliver reliable, well paid work.

George Noakes
Dover

the South China Sea. In a year's time we will not have that option. So let us put these anti democratic enemies in their place and protect freedom.

Peter Booth,
Former chair, South Thanet
Conservative Association

PM on the run from our MEPs

YET again Theresa May is avoiding making her case in public, this time running scared of the European Parliament.

She lives in fear of scrutiny, especially when it comes to the Tory government's variously magical thinking and entirely contradictory aims and claims on Brexit.

If we weren't governed by democracy, it'd almost be understandable that she doesn't want to lay out the Brexit shambles for all to see. But we do.

The PM might be in the habit of shutting out debate in her own parliament, but, ultimately, she will have to face down MEPs. Her extreme Brexit plans and the disdain her ministers have shown towards EU negotiators does mean, of course, this is going to be a hard sell.

The first rule of negotiations is you've got to show up. May would be wise to put some energy into trying to get MEPs on side - if the PM fails to convince the European Parliament on issues such as UK and EU citizens' rights and environmental safeguards then any proposed agreement is likely to be rejected when it is put to us in 2019.

It seems to have slipped her mind that MEPs will be voting on the final Brexit deal (an opportunity democracy dictates should be extended to the British people too). Theresa May would do well to involve us in discussions, rather than shutting herself away behind closed doors - again.

Keith Taylor,
Green MEP for the south east

Trump v Obama: Round 3 begins

DENNIS Clegg, in his partisan comparison between the achievements of Barack Obama and Donald Trump [KoS letters, last week] conveniently omits to mention that the former was in power for eight years, while Mr Trump has only been in office for eight months.

In addition, although the Republicans do have a majority in Congress, the American political establishment detests the fact that an outsider has entered the White House, so many of Mr Trump's initiatives have been blocked. Nevertheless he is certainly attempting to fulfil the campaign promises he made.

Mr Clegg also carefully does not mention the most glaring failure of Obama, in that, having laid down red lines concerning the use of chemical weapons in Syria, he then did nothing when they were breached.

Those who attempt to pretend that there is some sort of moral equivalence between Mr Trump and Kim Jong-Un choose to overlook the unpalatable truth that the latter is a psychopath, who has ordered the murder of his own brother and uncle, executed people by the use of artillery and approves the killing of whole families if one member offends against the dictatorship. As a kindness to Mr Clegg I will not list more of the many atrocities committed by the Kim regime, although they are legion.

The reality is that, both in this country, with the vote for Brexit, and in the USA with the election of Mr Trump, the left liberals, who have dominated the political establishment for many years, thought that they had no need to consider the interests of the ordinary citizens, if they conflicted with the former's smug views. They have received an almighty shock, and are now lashing out, attempting to overturn the will of the people.

Colin Bullen,
Tonbridge

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Herne Bay Airshow

by **Rita Keatley from
Canterbury**

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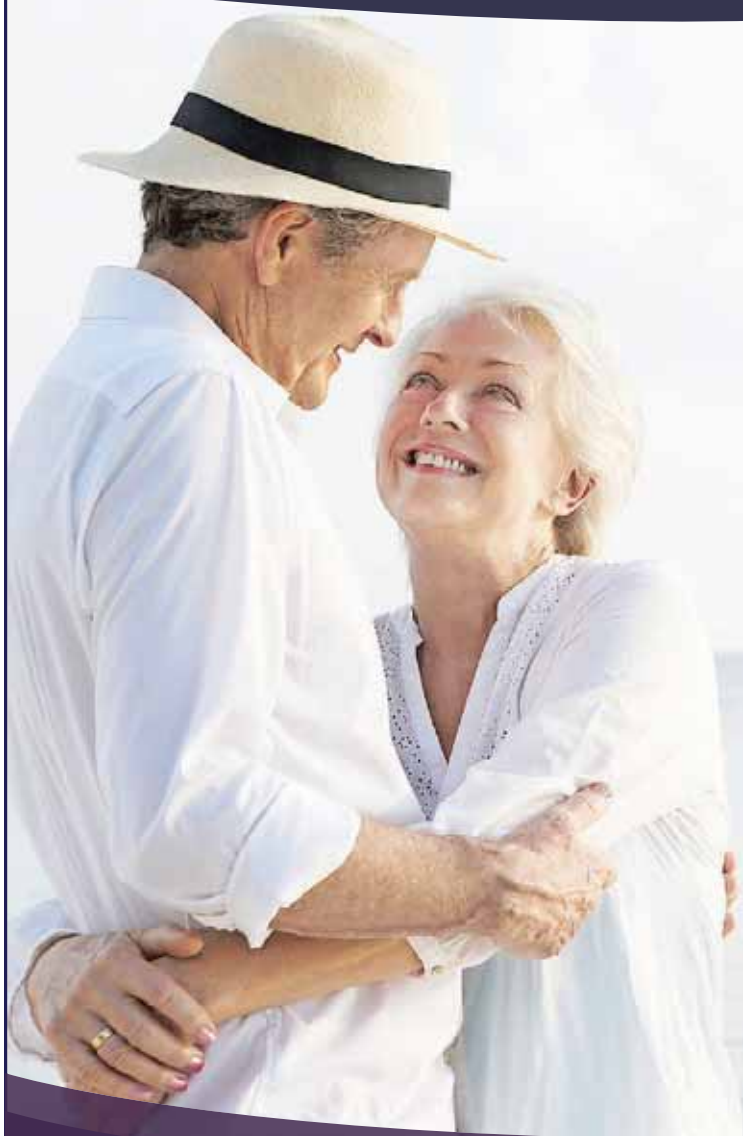
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COMPACT: Kona will take Hyundai into the compact sport utility vehicle sector later this year. Pictures: Hyundai



Compact Kona to boost SUV line-up for Hyundai

HYundai is launching a compact sport utility vehicle – the Kona – which is due to join the Tucson and Santa Fe SUVs in late October.

The Kona's exterior has been given dramatic styling touches, from slim daytime front running lights to contrasting black 'armour' designed to both protect it and give a more dynamic look. The two-tone roof and 10 exterior colours offer many individual style combinations.

Euisun Ching, vice chairman of Hyundai Motor Company, said: "With the Kona, we have created a stylish and highly-functional compact SUV, perfectly suited to the needs of customers who pursue challenging, action-filled lifestyles. We aim to set new standards for the compact SUV segment, with appealing design, cutting-edge connectivity and class leading safety features."

Inside, the Kona benefits from a large infotainment screen, designed to 'float' above the dashboard to give a better sense of interior space. It will incorporate smartphone connectivity options such as Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

Kona will be the first Hyundai available with a head-up display to project relevant driving information directly into the driver's line of sight.



The underfloor layout of the car has been extensively worked on so, despite offering four-wheel-drive, there's plenty of room for all passengers. The 361-litre boot rises to 1,143 litres with the 60/40 split rear seats folded.

At launch, the Kona features two turbo petrol engines with strong low-end torque and fuel efficiency - 120PS 1.0-litre, three-cylinder, with

six-speed manual transmission, and 177PS, 1.6-litre, four-cylinder driven through a seven-speed dual-clutch automatic. An optional four-wheel-drive system will be available.

Next summer, Hyundai will launch its next-generation 115 and 136PS 1.6-litre turbo diesel engines with manual or automatic transmission and optional four wheel drive.

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Practicality key for latest Fiat 500L

The latest Fiat 500L sees minor styling updates and more technology introduced but what hasn't changed is its family-focused practicality, says Andy Russell

THE Fiat 500L multi-purpose vehicle is a car we're pretty familiar with by now as a far more practical take on the hugely-popular little 500.

The latest 500L gets a slightly revised exterior, more minimalist interior and a greater focus on technology – with new infotainment system and improved driver assistance systems.

The regular 500 is loved for its cute, retro-inspired image, blowing that same aesthetic to a larger scale doesn't quite work. Contrasting colours on the roof do go some way to spicing up the 500L's exterior.

Inside, a new dash layout, more minimal in its design, is dominated by that new seven-inch touchscreen infotainment system. The 500L has been designed for family use and will be successful in this department.

Children will find plenty of room in the back, even three abreast. Adults may not be as happy as the back seats sit higher than those in the front so may find their heads touch the roof.

Boot space is a respectable 455 litres with the rear seats in their forward position, and can be



increased to a cavernous 1,480 litres when folded down.

The 1.4-litre T-Jet turbo petrol in the test car was smooth under hard acceleration but didn't offer up much puff lower down.

Around town, however, it's more

than capable of getting the 500L moving with a slick six-speed manual gearbox.

Being a mini multi-purpose vehicle, driving dynamics were never going to be mind-blowing. While there's a good deal of lean through



corners, the nicely-weighted steering was communicative enough that you knew where the car's limits are.

Where the 500L impresses is on poor roads – certainly up front, you don't notice any shuddering or crashing over the big bumps and

Fiat 500L

Price: **from £16,195**
 Engine tested: **1.4-litre, 120hp, four-cylinder T-Jet turbo petrol**
 Performance: **0-60mph 10 seconds; top speed 117mph**
 MPG: **42.2 combined**
 CO2 emissions: **155g/km**

craters.

The Fiat 500 is aimed at young city dwellers, the 500L at young families who still want the flair and personality of the 500, but in a more practical package.

The Fiat 500L still has those divisive looks, and doesn't drive any better than it used to. That said, it offers practicality, and young families in the market for a more left-field wagon could find the 500L appealing.

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C-HR Icon 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2T VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 38.1 (7.4), Extra Urban 55.4 (5.1), Combined 47.8 (5.9). CO2 Emissions 135g/km. All mpg and CO2 figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated laboratory test results. These are provided to allow comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect your actual driving experience.
 *Model shown is C-HR Icon 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2 VVT-i Manual at £695 Advance Payment. Subject to availability. Available as part of the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. Please note that a total of 60,000 miles over three years are allowed on the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. Offer valid between 1st July and 30th September 2017.

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Interview Date – TBC

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- Maths and English GCSE Grade C and above (or equivalent)
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- 12 months' experience working in a marketing administration environment
- Social Media marketing experience
- Experience using Umbraco or equivalent
- Experience using CMS
- Experience using Mail Chimp
- Experience using Google Adwords and Google Analytics
- Motivated, with ability to work under pressure
- Must hold full, clean driving license with access to own transport

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:
David Osborne, Business Development Director on 01304 222 679

Clinical Nurse Manager - Margate

Full Time – 37.5 hours per week

Salary – £35,000 - £40,000 per annum

Closing Date – Ongoing

Interview Date – TBC

Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level, 5 years post registration
- ENB 999
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- Team builder with expertise in change management
- Root cause analysis/management of quality improvement
- Excellent communication and listening skills
- Role model to provide advice and guidance to staff
- Ability to participate in on call systems

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:
Cheryl Lloyds, Matron on 01843 234 242

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES



Kent and Medway

NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 28 September 2017

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, who provide mental health and a range of other services to the people of Kent and Medway, will be holding it's AGM at Trust headquarters:

**Farm Villa, Hermitage Lane,
Maidstone, Kent ME16 9PH.**

2pm – 3.30pm

The meeting will include a review of the past year, current focus and a financial report.

To confirm your attendance email
communications@kmpt.nhs.uk
or call **01622 724100**.

Licensing Act 2003

**Application for a Variation of a
Premises Licence**

Name of Applicant: Mr Ilesh V Patel

Premises: West Street Newsagents Ltd – 54-56 West
St Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1AR

Existing licensable Activities: Sale of alcohol Mon
– Sun 06:00 until 23:00

Proposed Licensable activities: (1) Removal of
condition - No beers, lager or cider will be sold
above 5.5% ABV (2) Extension of hours for sale of
alcohol Mon – Sun 05:30 until 23:00

End of Consultation period:

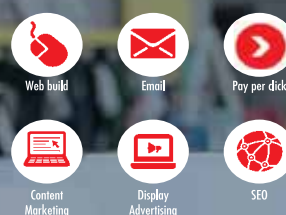
Any objections to this application must be made in
writing to The Licensing Department
Swale Borough Council
Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent, ME10 3HT

Objections must be received within 28 days of the
date of this notice.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a
false statement in connection with an application.
Any person who makes a false statement is liable, on
summary conviction, to a maximum fine of £5,000

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Shakey gearing up for Showdown

Shane Byrne holds a slim advantage going into the weekend

Motorsport

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

SHANE 'Shakey' Byrne insists there is no room for error as he gears up for the start of the British Superbike Championship Showdown this weekend.

The Sheppey rider, and five-time champion, leads the standings ahead of the Oulton Park event, but will know full well that this is the closest ever top six title fight and that complacency is not an option.

Just six points separate defending champion Byrne from arch rival Leon Haslam and the pair shared the victories in Cheshire back in May.

However, the leading duo had a disastrous weekend at Silverstone by their usual standards and need to get their campaigns back on track this weekend at the crucial part of the season.

Byrne and Haslam also have to contend with the threat of third placed Josh Brookes who is finely poised just four points adrift, while Jake Dixon, who at 21 became the youngest ever rider to secure a Showdown position last Sunday, Peter Hickman and Jason O'Halloran make up the rest of the top six.

Speaking ahead of a huge weekend of action, Byrne said: "It has been a difficult year for everybody, you only have to look at how long it took for all six of us to get confirmed."

"I have had a round off and everyone has missed races and that hurts in the points."



READY: Shane Byrne says there is no room for complacency

Pictures: ANDY KELLY

"I have been into the Showdown both ways; up and down on points before, and one year in particular we had the biggest advantage and I crashed and then it had gone. I am conscious of that fact."

"There were 15 podium points up for grabs at Silverstone and I had gone there fighting for all 15 but ended up with just one which wasn't ideal, but I had to take that one."

"It was a difficult weekend as I had been upside down twice which also wasn't ideal."

"I'm looking forward to Oulton Park as we had a good round there earlier in the season and far better than we did last year with the Ducati, so hopefully if we can get a first and a second like we did in May or try for another double, then we can keep pushing on."

Stones segregate fans at Gallagher Stadium

Football

HOME league and cup games at Maidstone United's Gallagher Stadium will be segregated for the remainder of the season.

For the past five years the club have looked at every game on an individual basis but having spoken to and taken advice from all the various safety bodies, it has been decided that it is in the best interest of home and visiting supporters to have separate sections.

It comes in a week where thousands of FC Koln fans managed to make their way into the home section of Arsenal's Emirates Stadium during their Europa League clash on Thursday.

The Stones' chief executive Bill Williams told the club's website: "Supporters' safety has and always will be paramount here at Maidstone United and the decision of the

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk



HOME: Gallagher Stadium

directors has been taken purely on that basis. It wasn't a decision we took lightly but in the context of how our club has evolved, personally I believe that it is a necessity and not necessary a bad thing."

"In my opinion it improves the overall experience for everyone and it is pretty much the norm at this level, with just three clubs we visited last season having open grounds."

At present the stadium can only be segregated at the Genco Stand and north east corner of the ground, where catering and toilet facilities are available exclusively for away supporters.

In the next few weeks, the club and Shepherd Neame are investing in better bar facilities under the Genco Stand to make the area more welcoming for both sets of fans.

North & West

Sport Shorts » Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

Hodgson replaces De Boer at Crystal Palace

FORMER England manager Roy Hodgson was this week appointed Crystal Palace boss after Frank De Boer was sacked after just four games.

The Eagles had lost every Premier League match under the Dutchman's stewardship, failing to score a single goal in the process.

Now, Hodgson, who enjoyed spells at Gravesend, Maidstone, Ashford and Tonbridge as a player, has been chosen to replace De Boer in the dugout at Selhurst Park.

He said: "It is very rewarding to find myself here now, in different times, as the Palace manager at a club that I have always loved and admired with a huge potential."

"The ambitions here are realistic and there is an enormous potential for growth and I hope we can achieve our goals."

Palace currently train in Beckenham but chairman Steve Parish told us last year the club was looking at other sites for a training ground, including potentially some further south into Kent.



BACK: Roy Hodgson



VENUE: Park View Road

Defender Parter given nod to leave Welling

WELLING United have terminated the contract of defender Jack Parter by mutual consent.

The 23-year-old signed in the summer from Tonbridge Angels but was injured in pre-season and was then sent on loan to Kingstorian in the hunt for regular first team football.

However, the club announced this week that Parter had left Park View Road on a permanent deal.

Boss Jamie Coyle said: "Jack was unfortunate to miss the whole of pre-season with injury and with the current form of both of our full-backs, we couldn't see him getting into the team."

"I would like to wish him all the best wherever he ends up playing."

The Wings face Haringey Borough in the latest FA Cup qualifying round this weekend.

Gills Ladies back at Priestfield

GILLINGHAM Ladies are back at Priestfield this afternoon (Sunday) for the visit of Swindon Town.

The ladies defeated West Ham at ME7 on the opening day of the season having not played at the stadium for over two-and-a-half years.

Kallie Balfour struck in the 89th minute to clinch victory as the Gills

ran out 1-0 winners against the Hammers.

Over the course of the 2017/18 campaign a selection of games will be played at Priestfield and some at Chatham Town's CJ Doors Stadium.

Boss Jack Wheeler said: "We are very grateful for the support we have received so far and we will look to build on a positive start."

Keep up-to-date with all Kent's sports news via social media on:



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Facebook www.facebook.com/kentsport.3



The Sittingbourne Community College

www.sittingbournecommunitycollege.org.uk
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YEAR 6 OPEN EVENING

Wednesday 4th October 5:00pm - 7:30pm

Headteacher's speech - 6:00pm & 6:45pm

Parental Tours are available daily from

Monday 2nd October - Friday 13th October 2017

9:00 - 9:45am 10:45 - 11:30am

Please contact the college office for more information

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Open Evening

28th September 2017

5:30pm until 8:30pm

Welcome speech by Headteacher 5:30pm and 6:30pm

No appointment necessary.

Autumn Open Week

9th October until

13th October 2017

Tour Times 9am and 10:45am

Please book an appointment.

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Monday 30 October - Friday 3 November

Tours between 9am - 10am and 11am - 12pm

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